

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by HMIE addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Inverclyde Council to change the constitution of the Stella Maris ASN Provision at Notre Dame High School.

April 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from HMIE has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal by Inverclyde Council to change the constitution of the Stella Maris ASN Provision at Notre Dame High School. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council's consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for young people of the school; young people likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at both public meetings held on 25 February 2026 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the site of Stella Maris ASN provision at Notre Dame High School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Inverclyde Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The public consultation ran from 2 February to 18 March 2026. Copies of the proposal were made available to stakeholders and on the council website. Two public meetings were held on 25 February 2026 at Notre Dame High School. In total, six stakeholders attended these meetings. Stakeholders at the public meeting were positive about the need for enhanced places to meet the

demand. The council received nine responses from parents or parent representatives. One respondent was in favour of the proposal and eight disagreed with the proposal. Stakeholders raised a number of concerns including increased numbers of young people in the provision could impact negatively on levels of supervision and focussed learning. That this could lead to reduced learning outcomes and social development.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 HM Inspectors agree that there are potential educational benefits to the proposal to change the constitution of the Stella Maris ASN provision to moderate learning difficulties at Notre Dame High School. The council believes this provision would still be able to meet the language and communication needs of pupils attending as well as those who had different ASN profiles. This proposal is one of five proposals Inverclyde are currently undertaking to address the needs of the increasing number of children across Inverclyde who require specialist provision. These align with national policy on Additional Support for Learning and the presumption of mainstreaming by increasing local capacity to meet a broader range of learner needs within a mainstream setting. This is also part of a wider programme of proposed reforms to support young people requiring additional support. If agreed, the proposal will have an impact on the current space available in classrooms. It will be important that space for teaching and learning in classrooms and toilet facilities across the provision is sufficient. HM Inspectors agree that this proposal has the potential to support access to learning.

3.2 HM Inspectors met with stakeholders including young people, parents and staff. A few stakeholders questioned whether staffing would be adequate as the pupil population increases. They would like assurance that the pupil and staffing ratio will be reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the changing numbers and needs of young people attending Stella Maris. A few parents also highlighted the need to review carefully the impact of the proposed changes on young people currently with language and communication needs, as well as those who have different ASN profiles. Stakeholders want any change to help young people meet their future aspirations and ambitions. If the proposal is agreed, it will be important for the council also ensure there is sufficient resources, services and specialist provisions to meet the changing additional support needs. HM Inspectors agree that this is an important consideration when changes are made to provision.

3.3 Staff who met HM Inspectors are positive about engaging in professional learning so support them to best meet the needs of all young people in the school. As Stella Maris continues to increase its pupil population, the council will need to continue to ensure that young people have appropriate support within the provision and also when accessing mainstream classes. HM Inspectors recognise that further professional learning may be required by staff working with young people within the provision, and the wider school team to fully the needs of all young people who attend the provision in future years.

4. Summary

Overall, HM Inspectors agree that Inverclyde Council's proposed change to the constitution of The Stella Maris ASN Provision at Notre Dame High School has potential educational benefits. If the proposal is agreed, it will be important for the council to secure appropriate supports, resources, services and specialist provisions to meet the changing additional support needs. HM Inspectors recommend that the council provide reassurance to parents about the concerns they have raised. These include; how it plans to continue to ensure that current support is not diminished by increasing the teacher pupil ratio and that staff are sufficiently experienced and supported to deliver this provision to a high standard.

HM Inspectors
April 2026

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland